



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

GET THE FACTS

May 26, 2016

A mayor in Miami-Dade County recently expressed concerns about a perceived lack of information regarding what is being done to help South Florida address the potential future impacts of saltwater intrusion on drinking water supplies. For decades, the South Florida Water Management District has aggressively worked with utilities and local governments to ensure adequate future water supply.

The Facts:

- One of the District's core missions is to assure there is sufficient water supply to meet South Florida's needs through the regulation of water use.
- The District controls water use permitting and has used this permitting to prevent overuse of the Biscayne Aquifer for water supply. Overuse of that shallow aquifer can exacerbate the pace of saltwater intrusion.
- The District's strong regulation of water use is helping to limit use of the Biscayne Aquifer and slow the pace of saltwater intrusion.
- The District operates its regional water management system using coastal salinity control structures to prevent the intrusion of saltwater into the coastal aquifers and to promote groundwater recharge areas.
- The completion of key Everglades restoration will deliver more freshwater to the Everglades. These projects are countermeasures to the effects of saltwater intrusion on South Florida's drinking water supply.
- In 2008 the District adopted a strong regional water availability rule which limits withdrawals from the Biscayne Aquifer and requires water reuse and conservation measures. This stringent rule has also required utilities to seek alternate water sources such as the deeper Floridan Aquifer.
- The District periodically maps underground saltwater intrusion into coastal aquifers. U.S. Geologic Survey mapping from 1984 to 2014 in Miami-Dade County has shown little inland movement of saltwater into coastal aquifers.

- The District leads regional water supply planning in cooperation with utilities and local governments in Miami-Dade County. These District plans ensure enough future water supply for all South Florida residents to meet demand for the next 20 years. The plans, which the District updates every five years, account for sea level rise and saltwater intrusion.

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The South Florida Water Management District is a regional governmental agency that manages the water resources in the southern part of the state. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts. Our mission is to protect South Florida's water resources by balancing and improving flood control, water supply, water quality and natural systems.

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